



The Evolution of the *Loudoun Times-Mirror*

Source: *Inside Loudoun: The Way It Was* by Frances H. Reid

The first newspaper in Loudoun County was printed in 1798. Called *The True American*, it was published in Leesburg by M. Bartgis and W. Sullivan. By early 1800, the paper had been sold to one Patrick McIntyre. Its contents included notices, advertisements, a few local items, and a message to readers from McIntyre that the paper would do better at news coverage when he could get a larger press. When that time came, McIntyre wrote, he could serve the literary, moral and political nature of the times. Although *The True American* didn't last long, Patrick McIntyre would continue his work as a publisher and begin a chain that provided a direct link to the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* of today.



In 1808, McIntyre established the *The Washingtonian*, which continued in publication until 1903, except for the Civil War years. Recognized as the mouthpiece of the Jeffersonian Party, [the forerunner to the present-day Democratic Party], this newspaper had the most consistent pattern of week-by-week printings of any of its contemporaries. In 1903, *The Washingtonian* merged with *The Mirror*.



The *Loudoun Mirror* had been established in 1855 by J.B. Taylor and B.F. Sheetz. In 1860, Mr. Taylor sold his interest in the paper to Mr. Sheetz. Publication of this newspaper was suspended during the Civil War; when it resumed printing in 1865, it was called simply, *The Mirror*.

In 1903 *The Mirror* and *The Washingtonian* negotiated Loudoun's first newspaper merger. At the end of ninety-five years of operation, *The Washingtonian* editor, Captain William B. Lynch, described the change:

With this issue of *The Washingtonian* its publication will be suspended, the proprietors of *The Mirror* and this paper have consolidated the two papers and will on Wednesday, the 8th of January 1903 commence the publication of *The Loudoun Mirror*, the successor of *The Washingtonian* and *Mirror*.

Mr. Lynch continued:

We have not the physical force at our time of life to alone do the work essential to the publication of a weekly paper and have merged with a paper with talent and young ambition to make it meet the demands now required of a well conducted county paper.

In 1907, Arthur Divine purchased *The Mirror*, changing its name back to *Loudoun Mirror*. In 1916, the *Loudoun Times* was established by Harry T. Harrison. Early in 1924, this relatively new paper merged with *The Mirror*, giving birth to the *Loudoun Times-Mirror*. The offices and plant were moved into a building on North King Street, where the paper's work continued until 1955. In that year, the operation moved to 9 East Market Street in Leesburg. Its offices are there to this day.

In 1963, Arthur Arundel, of The Plains, became the owner and publisher of the *Times-Mirror*. Under the leadership of Arundel, a major building expansion was carried out in 1974, with the addition of an impressive two-story wing behind the old King Street building, which doubled the plant size. The aim was to provide all of the space a newspaper would need through the year 2000. However, by 1980 a second expansion was needed, one geared to providing newsprint storage, future web press, a larger mailroom, and computer services. By then the circulation of the paper was 14,713 and sold at 35 cents per copy. Still going strong, the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* currently serves 19,000 customers per week in Loudoun County, at about 50 cents a copy. Having long outgrown the printing facilities at the King Street address, the paper is printed at Gannett Offset, Inc. in Springfield, Virginia. The *Loudoun Times-Mirror* remains the county's largest newspaper